



National Transportation Safety Board

The Chairman's Corner

www.nts.gov



Friday, April 13, 2007

Chairman Rosenker Delivers William A. Patterson Lecture at Northwestern University Transportation Center

Chairman Mark Rosenker delivered the William A. Patterson Transportation Lecture at the Northwestern University Transportation Center on Wednesday, April 11, 2007. The William A. Patterson Distinguished Chair in Transportation was established in 1978 as an intellectual focal point for transportation research and education at Northwestern University, much of which is coordinated through the university's Transportation Center. Prior lecturers at this event included: Fred Smith, CEO of FedEx, Herb Kelleher, Founder of Southwest Airlines, and Norman Mineta, former Secretary of Transportation. At the lecture, the Chairman discussed the role that technology will play in the future of highway safety. He called on the research community to work with industry and government to move quickly to deploy these available technologies, with the NTSB being an active participant in understanding the implications of advanced highway technology. "In the end," he concluded, "we recognize that the driver must take responsibility. Our job is to give drivers the tools they need to make the most of that responsibility."



While in Chicago, Chairman Rosenker was accompanied by Counselor Tom Doyle, and Brenda Yager, Director of Government and Industry Affairs. They met with officials of United Airlines' Safety Department and toured the Crisis Center at United's World Headquarters.

Chairman Mark Rosenker delivering the Patterson Lecture at Northwestern University

Vice Chairman Sumwalt Visits Denver

On April 11 Vice Chairman Sumwalt addressed the Air Line Pilot's Association's (ALPA) Pilot Assistance Forum in Denver, Colorado. The Vice Chairman discussed professional standards as it related to the Pinnacle Airlines Flight # 3701 accident and he discussed the NTSB's recommendations from that accident. One recommendation called for the FAA to work with pilot associations to develop a specific education program for air carrier pilots that addresses professional standards and their role in ensuring safety of flight.

Vice Chairman Sumwalt said professional standards programs are still vitally needed in the industry and commented "people die when professionalism is left at the gate."

While in Denver the Vice Chairman and his special assistant, Heather Eilers-Bowser, visited with the Central Mountain Regional Office and also met with a representative from Frontier Airlines' Safety Department. They met to discuss the NTSB recommendation from the Circuit City accident that involved training crews to better monitor flight status.

Member Higgins Testifies in Vermont

Member Kitty Higgins testified in Montpelier, Vermont, on Thursday, April 12, 2007, before the House Transportation Committee of the Vermont Legislature in support of key provisions contained in a comprehensive transportation safety bill. The omnibus transportation safety legislation includes primary enforcement seat belt legislation, graduated driver license (GDL) provisional and learner permit vehicle decals (not yet required in any state but used in Australia, some European and British commonwealth countries), nighttime driving and interactive wireless communications device restrictions for young drivers, and a hands-free cell phone requirement for all drivers.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration did not testify but their regional office supports the testimony by the Safety Board. Other supportive testimony was presented to the committee. The bill originated in the House Judiciary Committee and passed 10-1. The bill has been reported by the House Judiciary Committee, and has the support of the House leadership. Its fate in the Senate is less certain. It is not clear what the committee will do, but the Speaker is determined to move the omnibus legislation. Accompanied by Kevin Quinlan, Member Higgins met with the Governor, the Speaker of the House, the Lt. Governor and a number of Members of the Senate and the House to urge the adoption of the Bill before leaving Montpelier.

Chairman Rosenker and Member Chealander Tour Regional Offices

In addition to speaking at Northwestern University and visiting United Airlines, Chairman Rosenker met with staff at the North Central Regional Office in West Chicago, IL on April 10. The Chairman, Tom Doyle, and Brenda Yager were able to meet with various members of the office. The previous week the Chairman and Brenda Yager traveled to the Central Mountain Regional Office in Denver where they met staff and discussed current issues. After Denver, Chairman Rosenker ventured to Dallas, Texas where he met up with Member Chealander to visit with the NTSB's South Central Regional Office, as well as officials at American Airlines. The regional office staff had an open discussion with Chairman Rosenker and Member Chealander and then enjoyed lunch in the Arlington area. Afterward, the two visited the American Airlines Flight Operations Center, where they discussed safety surrounding lithium batteries on commercial aircraft.

Member Chealander Meets With The Association of American Railroads

Member Chealander traveled with Bob Chipkevich this week to Pueblo, Colorado to learn from the Association of American Railroads about recently completed and ongoing research efforts in the rail industry at their Transportation Technology Center. Some of the new technologies being developed include the use of acoustic technology to assess the condition of rail car roller bearings, lasers to improve the internal inspection of rail, a system for inspecting and assessing the condition of rail car wheels while a train is moving, and a positive train control system to enforce the safe movement of trains. They also visited the emergency response training center at the site where they observed a demonstration on the use of explosives to vent and safely release hazardous materials from a tank car, a procedure used at railroad accident sites when tank cars are determined to be too severely damaged to be unloaded by conventional methods. Finally, they observed the first in a series of scheduled tests designed to learn about the performance of tank cars under specific conditions, with the expectation that information learned through testing at the site later be used to improve tank car performance under accident conditions.

A Message From Chairman Rosenker on National Volunteer Week



It is with kindness and compassion that countless volunteers throughout the Washington area generously donate their time, talents, and energy to numerous service projects. During National Volunteer Week, I am celebrating this spirit of service by participating in several volunteer projects. National Volunteer Week reflects the power that volunteers have to “inspire by example” — volunteers both encourage those they help and motivate others to serve.

I hope that the three events in which I am working will encourage others to participate in volunteerism. Of course, I invite employees to join me in volunteering this week in the three events I have chosen or in other activities where the volunteer can make a difference. The kickoff event for me is a beautification effort at the Army Community Services (ACS) facility at the Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Along with the other volunteers, I will help clean up the exterior grounds and plant new flowers outside the building making the facility more pleasant and

attractive for our injured service men and women returning from overseas and their visiting families. This event will take place Friday, April 20th, 2007, 9:00 – 3:00. While there, I will have the opportunity to recognize some of Walter Reed’s outstanding volunteers, who have donated hundreds of hours of their time, by presenting the President’s Volunteer Service Award – I hope some of you will join me.

My second volunteer activity actually involves informing the Board’s employees of the opportunity to assist injured service men and women and their families with the expenses of transitioning home. Not all families have the means to travel and stay locally to support the wounded service men and women at Walter Reed. There are two programs that, I believe, can make a difference for these families. The first involves the provision of gift certificates for visiting families to use at local retailers; and the second involves the donation of airline miles through the “hero miles” program (<http://www.fisherhouse.org/programs/heroMilesDonate.shtml>). I believe that these programs, and others like them, will ease the difficulties our country’s wounded heroes and their families face while recovering. If you are interested in the opportunities I have mentioned, I will make additional information available on them soon. If you have other ideas, I would appreciate hearing about them, as well!

Finally, during Volunteer week, I will finalize the logistics for any NTSB volunteers that want to do so to provide a home-cooked meal at the Army Community Services (ACS) building in support of their outreach program. Soldiers returning home are typically provided reunification support through their home units, which are, in many ways, their military community and family. Wounded soldiers at Walter Reed don’t have access to this support. ACS seeks to bridge this gap with a Wounded Warriors and Family Members Eat, Meet and Greet and asks community volunteers to support this initiative by providing a home-cooked meal. At the meal, counselors, clergy and volunteers mingle with the soldiers and families to facilitate establishment of a support network of families. I hope to plan an occasion where I, and any volunteers from the Safety Board that wish to join me, will help with cooking, setup, service, and cleanup for one of these events. I’m looking forward to the honor of meeting some of our nation’s heroes and sharing the good food, good company, and good fellowship this event will provide. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Jim Arena, NTSB White House Volunteer Coordinator.

Thank you for your support and thanks to all of you who give of your time and talents as volunteers.

